

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention discloses a method and system for providing a secure time reference for content players. Specifically, the present invention pertains to a method of inserting a time reference signal into a delivery system for the purpose of affecting the playback of delivered content. Players of content, which consists of movies, songs or other copyrighted intellectual property and for this purpose would contain appropriate coding, can use the secure time reference to limit or enable playback. This provides a measure of control of the intellectual property and leads the way to, among other things, effective online movie rental or short-term song listening. It is appreciated that the content involved could be delivered to the consumer by internet, cable, telephone, direct satellite, packaged media, or any other means.